

## AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 22 of page 15 with the following amended paragraph:

FIG. 5 is a flowchart illustrating the steps performed by the appearance enhancement and compressibility improvement mechanism in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. In step 500, a first window of pixels (e.g., a filter selection window) is received. In step 510, the level of variation, which is an example of an activity metric, within the first window is computed. For example, the level of variation may be determined by computing the mean ~~average~~ absolute deviation (MAD) of the green color plane, the red color plane, the blue color plane, or of a plane extracted from all three color planes (e.g., a luminance plane) as described in greater detail hereinafter with reference to FIG. 6.